

LIMERKENS *et al.* – Filed July 26, 2001

APPENDIX

VERSION WITH MARKINGS SHOWING CHANGES MADE

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

The specification is changed as follows:

Page 2, the paragraph starting at line 1:

The present invention thus concerns a process for the preparation of foamed thermoplastic polyurethanes whereby the foaming of the thermoplastic polyurethane is carried out in the presence of thermally expandable microspheres and in the presence of an additional blowing agent, said microspheres containing a hydrocarbon.

Page 8, the paragraph starting at line 14:

[In a preferred embodiment, a] A blowing agent is added to the system, which may either be an exothermic or endothermic blowing agent, or a combination of both. Most preferably however, an endothermic blowing agent is added.

Page 13, line 21:

Example 4 (comparative)

IN THE CLAIMS:

The claims are amended as follows:

1. (Amended) Process for the preparation of foamed thermoplastic polyurethanes
[characterised in that] wherein the foaming of the thermoplastic polyurethane is carried out in the presence of thermally expandable microspheres and in the presence of an additional blowing agent, said microspheres containing a hydrocarbon.
3. (Amended) Process according to **[any of the preceding claims]** claim 1 wherein an endothermic blowing agent is present.
4. (Amended) Process according to **[any of the preceding claims]** claim 1 wherein an exothermic blowing agent is present.
5. (Amended) Process according to claim 3 **[or 4]** wherein the endothermic blowing agent comprises bicarbonates or citrates.
6. (Amended) Process according to **[any of claims 4-5]** claim 1 wherein the exothermic blowing agent comprises azodicarbonamide type compounds.
7. (Amended) Process according to **[any of the preceding claims]** claim 1 which is carried out by injection **[moulding]** molding.
8. (Amended) Process according to **[any of the preceding claims]** claim 1 which is carried out in a pressurized **[mould]** mold.

9. (Amended) Process according to **[any of the preceding claims]** claim 1 wherein the starting thermoplastic polyurethane is made by using a difunctional isocyanate composition comprising an aromatic difunctional isocyanate.
12. (Amended) Process according to **[claims 9-11]** claim 9 wherein the difunctional polyhydroxy compound comprises a polyoxyalkylene diol or polyester diol.
15. (Amended) Process according to **[any of the preceding claims]** claim 1 wherein the amount of microspheres is between 0.5 and 4.0 parts by weight per 100 parts by weight of thermoplastic polyurethane.
17. (Amended) Process according to **[any of the preceding claims]** claim 1 wherein the amount of blowing agent is between 0.5 and 4.0 parts by weight per 100 parts by weight of thermoplastic polyurethane.
19. (Amended) Foamed thermoplastic polyurethane **[obtainable]** obtained by reacting a difunctional isocyanate composition with at least one difunctional polyhydroxy compound, in the presence of thermally expandable microspheres containing hydrocarbon, and in the presence of an additional blowing agent, said polyurethane having a density of not more than 700 kg/m³.

Claims 22 and 23 have been added as new claims.